

## **Chief of Engineers Recommends Devils Lake Outlet**

WASHINGTON D.C. - The U.S. Army's Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Robert B. Flowers, has signed a record of decision recommending an outlet at Devils Lake, North Dakota to reduce flood damages there and to reduce the risk of a natural overflow from the lake.

The recommendation includes constructing a 300 cubic feet per second outlet to withdraw water from Pelican Lake at Devils Lake, which will then be pumped to the Sheyenne River. This plan consists of installing pumping facilities, a regulation reservoir to manage flows to the Sheyenne River, an open channel and a buried pipeline as well as mitigation features to avoid or minimize effects on the environment.

Environmental mitigation features are integral to the project and include such things as acquiring and managing 6,000 acres of riparian habitat, protecting the Sheyenne River from erosion, maintaining high-flow bypass channels to provide for critical aquatic habitat, establishing water quality and quantity constraints where the water enters the Sheyenne River, and building a sand filter to minimize the risk of biota transfer from the lake into the Sheyenne River. Long-term monitoring and adaptive management are also key components of the project.

Lt. Gen. Flowers also found that the plan complies with environmental statutes provided that the State of North Dakota issues a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 water quality certification and a CWA Section 402 permit. Any future construction and operation is dependent upon issuance of the Section 401 certificate and Section 402 permit. This project is also dependent upon receipt of assurances from the Secretary of State that the project will not violate the Boundary Waters Treaty, and concurrence of cost sharing provisions with the local sponsor. The project is estimated to cost \$186.5 million in today's dollars.

Congress authorized construction of the outlet in the Omnibus Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2003, Public Law 108-7. Congress had previously directed the Corps to do preliminary engineering design and an environmental impact statement for an emergency outlet in 1997.

The St. Paul District, which led the preparation of the report, serves the American public in the areas of environmental enhancement, navigation, flood damage reduction, wetlands regulation, recreation sites and disaster response. It contributes around \$142 million to the local economy. The more than 750 employees work at more than 40 sites in five upper-Midwest states.

Additional information on Devils Lake is available at the St. Paul District website at: [http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/fl\\_damage\\_reduct/default.asp?pageid=14](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/fl_damage_reduct/default.asp?pageid=14)